

*To the Honourable Court of Directors for all Affairs of the
Honourable United Company of Merchants of England
trading to the East Indies.*

THE HUMBLE

P E T I T I O N

O F

G E O R G E B A L D W I N,

SHEWING,

THAT your Petitioner having resolved to settle himself at Grand Cairo, in Egypt, with a view of promoting a commercial intercourse with India by Suez and the Red Sea, and conceiving that the execution of of the same might afford a channel of intelligence very beneficial to the affairs of the honourable East India Company, your petitioner made a tender of his services to the honourable Court of Directors, and was answered by an official letter from Mr. Secretary Mitchell, dated May 26th, 1775, importing, that the honourable Court of Directors "approved of
" the offer, and that in consequence they would give orders to their
" several Presidencies in India, to forward the dispatches they might
" have occasion to send, for expedition's sake, under cover, to your
" petitioner; and that every reasonable expence attending the same should
" be thankfully re-imbursed."

Your Petitioner most solemnly declares to have understood at that time, that it was the idea of the honourable Court of Directors to repay him his disbursements at the same exchange that was allowed to Consul Abbott, of Aleppo, for similar service, namely, at the rate of five shillings per Turkish dollar, being intended to be in lieu of gratuity for the trouble of forwarding the Honourable Company's dispatches; and as a compensation, in lieu of interest, for the money during the time of the disburse, until repayment was made, and other incidental charges in opening and keeping open the communication with India.

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Your

Your petitioner sailed from London about the 10th day of June, 1775, with a valuable cargo of English merchandize, calculated and intended for the Egyptian market, and arrived in Grand Cairo sometime in September following. The success of your Petitioner's plan, that had for object the establishing of a commercial intercourse with India, was very uncertain; and was not the only plan that he depended upon: he had more immediately in view the revival of a trade between England and Egypt, that had long been neglected and lost; and can say, having the testimony of living witnesses to support it, that the advantages deriving from that trade to your petitioner were sufficient, independently of all his prospects from an Indian trade, to gratify his hopes of ease, of competency, and of fortune.

With a view to the other part of his plan, that had for object the opening of a commercial intercourse with India by the isthmus of Suez, and which was to afford a channel for speedy intelligence to the honourable East India Company, your petitioner had to apply for specific permission from the Basha and Beys of Egypt to that effect; and was at very considerable expence in obtaining it.

Having so prepared the way, your petitioner had the satisfaction to have rendered very essential service to the honourable East India Company, as in January, 1776, a dispatch vessel arrived at Bengal, and was, in consequence of that permission, admitted to immediate intercourse with the country.

In December, 1776, His Majesty's sloop *Swallow*, commanded by Alexander Panton, Esq. arrived at Suez, having on board several of the Honourable Company's servants, charged with accounts of the unfortunate commotions that had taken place in the government of Madras; and your Petitioner obtained leave for their debarkation at Suez, and for their farther transit through the country. It was not, however, obtained upon this occasion without a great deal of difficulty, as the government of Egypt had been flattered with the expectation of great lucre from a flourishing commerce that was to be introduced to Suez, and were not pleased at affording a mere unreciprocated conveniency to the English of passing through their country. They were even so far impelled by their avidity, after they had granted their passports of protection, as to lay violent hands on Mr. Dalrymple and Colonel Capper, and to extort from them a heavy contribution. When the loaded ships arrived, the government were satisfied, and permitted the communication to be followed up and frequented without hindrance, or intention of molestation on their part, until the catastrophe of the year 1779.

Your Petitioner adduces these facts to prove that without the concurring advantages deriving to the government of Egypt from a trade, the expence of preserving the communication, as a channel of intelligence alone,

alone, would have exceeded any bounds that the Honourable Company might have been induced to prescribe to your Petitioner's zeal for the purpose of effecting it.

Your Petitioner was so fortunate as to merit the approbation of the Honourable Court of Directors upon all his endavours, until the transaction which regarded particularly the freighting of a vessel to carry dispatches to Lord Pigot, relative to his restoration to the government of Madras.. And upon that occasion his zeal was ascribed "to an extraordinary anxiety to serve particular persons, and gained him the severest censure of the Honourable Court of Directors." The charge was unmerited, and the censure was also done away in the same letter that conveyed it, by an act of remission on the part of the Honourable Court of Directors, declaring "that their displeasure should stop there, and that in confidence of receiving no further cause of complaint, they were induced to continue the agency in your Petitioner's hands."

The letter alluded to, was dated September the 19, 1777, and contained other matter relative to the subject of your Petitioner's re-imbursement. It enjoined, "That your Petitioner was not to presume to charge for his disbursements of any kind, on the Honourable Company's, account, any more than at the current rate of exchange, or, as it was afterwards fixed at 2s. 6d. per Turkish dollar." being only half of what he had reason to expect; and no sum assigned, in lieu of that deduction, as gratuity for service, or as compensation of any kind.

There was something in this injunction that operated as a punishment, as your Petitioner had no assurance whatever of the mode or quantum of the reward he was to receive for his services. Yet relying in the justice of the Honourable East India Company, notwithstanding these depressing and humiliating circumstances, your Petitioner would not be discouraged from doing what he thought might be beneficial to the Honourable Company's affairs. He foresaw a crisis was approaching that would bring the merits of his situation into a proper light. The political derangements of Europe had prepared his mind with the expectation of unavoidable war, and he had entreated his correspondents in all the principal cities in Europe to send him the earliest and most authentic intelligence of every proceeding that tended to such an event.

On the 27th of April, 1778. the hour arrived. Your petitioner received on this day the first intelligence of the hostile operations of the French; and, losing no time, his first concern was to secure the means of conveying the accounts to India. Captain Pruen of the Expedition, a private ship, was gone from Cairo on his return to India, and your Petitioner sent immediately a servant, mounted on a dromedary, with a letter after him, informing him of the occasion, and begging him to postpone his sailing till authentick advices could be obtained

from Alexandria, which measure was crowned with success. Your Petitioner at the same time sent off an express to Alexandria with directions to his agent there, to enquire of, and collect from the Captain of the Venetian vessel, who had brought the report of the war, all such real and certain circumstances concerning it as were to be depended upon; and the return of the express on the fourth of May, 1778, (a ship being arrived from Leghorn in the mean time) put your Petitioner in possession of all the following documents regarding the war, which he, on the same day, transmitted in a dispatch by Captain Pruett, who sailed on the seventh of the same month from Suez, to the President and Council of Bombay.

I. A deposition from the Venetian Captain Tarrabocchia, declaring, that the day he sailed from Coron, in Morea, a French Tartar entered that port, dispatched by the Chamber of Commerce at Marseilles, to inform the Consuls and French subjects of the hostile resolutions of the Court of France.

II. A letter from Signor Brandi, of Alexandria, advising the arrival of a Tartan at Alexandria, upon the same account, and of the French Consul of that place having assembled the merchants of his nation to communicate to them the orders of his Court, importing the hostile determinations of the Court of France.

III. A letter from Leghorn, dated April 9, 1778, from Messrs. Ottofrank and Co. containing advice of the French treaty with the Americans, calling them Free States.

IV. Auricular evidence collected from the French merchants of Cairo themselves, confirming all the above reports, besides certain accounts of the hostile detention of the British ships in the ports of France; the recall of the respective Ambassadors home; all which was reduced to paper, and testified by the English Gentlemen then in Cairo.

Three days after the departure of the above dispatch by Captain Pruett, that is to say, on the seventh of May, your Petitioner received further advices concerning the war, and upon contemplation of their importance, the possibility of misfortune to Captain Pruett, the critical position of things in India as to the season for acting, he was determined to provide an alternative, and your Petitioner prevailed on Captain Barrington, of the Nancy Ketch, to take them immediately in the following dispatch, viz.

“ To the Honourable President and Council of Madras.

“ HON. SIR AND SIRS,

“ THE original of the preceding duplicate went forward by the expedition, under command of Captain Pruett, but reflecting

reflecting since, that the season of the year when the packet will arrive there is not the most favourable for further promulgating this important intelligence over India, and that, by sending a vessel direct to Fort St. George and Bengal, the advice may be anticipated by fifteen or twenty days, I have resolved to use my best arguments with Captain Barrington, of the Nancy Ketch, to engage him to anticipate his departure, in order to convey with the utmost speed these advices to the Presidencies of Fort St. George and Bengal. He has consented in consequence of my representations, to depart immediately, and will, please God, be the bearer of the present. I have no authority to make any agreement with him upon this account, nor does he desire to depend upon a more certain rule than the honourable Company's known munificence for his reward. It becomes me to say in his behalf, that he quits some important concerns to go upon this service, and with as much cheerfulness as a more interested man would have shewn reluctance. I have the honour to be, &c. &c."

INCLOSURES in the above DISPATCH.

I. *Extract of a letter from John Birkbeck, Esq. British Agent at Marseilles, to George Baldwin, dated March 30, 1778.*

"THIS in all probability will be the last letter you will receive from me for some time, as I am setting off for Nice, where his Majesty has been pleased to make me Consul. There is also another essential reason; we are on the eve of a war; the French Ambassador is come home, and our's gone to England, without taking leave, and all English vessels stopped in the ports of France."

II. *Extract of another letter from John Birkbeck, Esq. dated the fourth of April, 1778.*

"THINGS are still in the same situation; the Minorca packet comes here no more, as we expect the Court of London to declare war daily. The Toulon fleet is failed."

III. *Extract of a letter from Messrs. Rumbold, Charlton and Raikes, dated London, March 20, 1778.*

"ALL the town is in a ferment with the expectation of a war with France. They have made a Treaty of Commerce with the Americans, whom they stile Free States; and we have no doubt but an immediate war will be the consequence."

IV. All Lloy'ds Evening papers for February, and to the 23d of March inclusive, containing the American treaty with France, and his Majesty's message to both Houses of Parliament in consequence of it.

Captain.

Captain Barrington sailed from Suez with this dispatch on the 10th of May.

All this done without expence to the Honourable Company, your Petitioner flattered himself with having accomplished a service for nothing, that, rather than have omitted, they would have paid for at the price of many thousand pounds. Compared with the effect, no consideration they could have given would have overpaid the service that produced it; yet your Petitioner is driven to except the obolus at the hands of those, whose humanity and friendship are the only obligations they are under to bestow it. Captain Barrington, who was the messenger of the news to India, received nothing for his pains, but being returned to Suez the year following, to look after the affairs he had neglected to go upon this important errand, was most cruelly involved in the effect of a command from the Porte, and plundered, and put to death by such means, as to recount would harrow up the soul.

On the 9th of June, being thirty-five days later than your Petitioner had forwarded his first dispatch from Cairo, and thirty-two days later than the second by Captain Barrington, Captain Matthews, charged with the Secret Committee's dispatches and orders of the 15th of April, arrived in Cairo. Your Petitioner assisted him to depart immediately, and he was on the desert proceeding for Suez, when on a sudden an insurrection happened in the city, the effects of which extending to the situation where Captain Matthews then was, his guide abandoned and left him exposed to all the dangers of the desert. Your Petitioner, suspecting his situation, sent out people to his assistance, and recovered him and his dispatches from the hazard of almost certain perdition. He then obtained a fresh and stronger escort, notwithstanding the disorders of the government, sensible of the emergency of the business, and conveyed him safe to Suez. He arrived there on the 21st of June, embarked immediately on board the Cormorant sloop of war, and sailed the same day with a fair wind for Madras. Captain Sutherland sailed at the same time with another packet for Bombay.

The duty of that year being closed, your Petitioner, considering the very laborious, expensive, and unpleasant contingencies attending the service, he had embarked in, owing to the unexpected concurrence of the Honourable Company's servants going to and from India; all of whom he was under the necessity, from indispensable reasons, of accommodating; and further comparing those circumstances with the uncertainty he was under of the honourable Company's intentions towards him, your Petitioner thought it incumbent upon himself to remonstrate upon his situation; and on the 25th of June, 1778, did, in a letter to the honourable Court of Directors, presume to address them in the following words, viz. " So far, honourable Sirs, I have been a volunteer in investigating
this

this route, and in evincing its utility and practicability. The event will prove it, and I remit my reward to your generosity; but for the future, unless it may please you to ascertain an adequate exchange for my disbursements, and a sufficient compensation for the extraordinary expence I must be at, to conciliate the aversion of the Beys of Egypt to the passage of packets and passengers through their country, I must confess I have not ability to support it. I must relinquish the employment with equal reluctance and respect."

Your Petitioner at the same time wrote to his attornies, Messrs. Rumbold, Charlton, and Raikes, of London, to solicit the honourable Court of Directors in behalf of his supplications, and, in consequence of their success, they, on the 27th of January, 1779, wrote to your Petitioner a letter containing the following words: viz. "We have this day been at the India House, and had an audience of the Chairman on your account. As to the freight of the Diligence, nothing is to be expected on that score; but we pressed the fixing an appointment for your services: we urged fully what services you could be of, if properly encouraged, and how much the Company's affairs might suffer, if you were irritated by a series of unpleasant circumstances. Sir George allowed this to be true; he acknowledged also, 'that *you had been materially useful of late in forwarding some accounts to Bombay*;' he said, the matter should be determined upon before he leaves the chair, and some allowance fixed: he talked of three or 400l. per year. We told him this was much below your expectations, and, that, at all events, we did not think you would accept of any consideration under 500l. per annum, as consulage. We are in hopes of bringing such a settlement to bear, if you are inclined to give us authority to that effect."

And in confirmation of the honourable Chairman's promise, that the matter should be determined upon before he left the chair, the honourable Court of Directors came to a resolution, on the 23d of March following, to order Mr. Secretary Mitchell to inform your Petitioner, by an official letter, "that they then had it under contemplation to allow him a handsome salary."

It appears, therefore, incontrovertably, that on the 27th of January, 1779, Sir George Wombwell, Chairman of the honourable Court of Directors, not only admitted that your Petitioner had rendered such services to the honourable Company as merited a salary, but such as the honourable Court of Directors were likewise of opinion had merited a handsome salary; and which, on the 23d of March following, they declared it was then under their contemplation to *allow him*.

Your Petitioner had no appointment before that time for services that involved him in very great expence and trouble. Your Petitioner had rendered important services to the honourable Company by forwarding
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material accounts from Bombay : your Petitioner had remonstrated that unless an adequate salary was appointed he could not support the employment. These were the reasons that operated with the honourable Court of Directors when they proposed to give your Petitioner a salary. Three or four hundred pounds per year, which the honourable Chairman had talked of as a proper appointment, was deemed insufficient. Your Petitioner's attornies objected to that sum. The honourable Court of Directors, did, in consequence, opine, That it was proper to allow your Petitioner *a handsome salary*.

On the first of April, the honourable Court of Directors came to a resolution, " That a present of 500l. be made to Mr. George Baldwin, for his zeal and attention to the Company's interest in the course of last year, by forwarding early and essential intelligence to India, at a very important crisis ; and that he be given to understand, that a continuance of his attention to the messengers which the Company may think proper to send by the way of Suez, and the conveying such other advices to and from their Precedencies in India as may offer, will not fail to ensure him the future favour of the Court of Directors."

Such was the handsome salary concluded upon, by the honourable Court of Directors, to be given to your Petitioner. It carries the name of a present of 500l. for specific services, during the course of the year 1778 ; but your Petitioner cannot be said to have received a present, when the sum that was voted to him with that qualification was due to him for salary. That it was salary, is proved by the words of the same resolution: " If your Petitioner continued his attention to the messengers which the Company might think proper to send by the way of Suez, and to the conveying such other advices as might offer to India, he would not fail to ensure himself the future favour of the Court."

That the future favour of the honourable Court of Directors referred to the sum then voted for salary, is clearly evinced by the assurances given by the honourable Court of Directors to Messrs. Rumbold, Charlton, and Raikes, your Petitioner's attornies, at the time the resolution was carried. In transmitting the said resolution to your Petitioner, in a letter dated the second of April, 1779, they (Messrs. Rumbold and Co.) wrote to your Petitioner as follows, viz. " After our repeated solicitations and attendance at the India House in your behalf, we have at last obtained from the India Company a *douceur* for your past services of 500l. and a *promise of the same sum* for your annual allowance as agent at Cairo for the honourable East India Company." They further say, " You will observe they have couched their intentions in an *ambiguous manner*, though we are assured by the Chairman and Directors, that if they have no reason to be dissatisfied with your conduct, it is their fixed intention to allow you the same yearly consideration."

Now

Now the ambiguity of the first part of the resolution consists in qualifying what had been promised to your Petitioner for salary with the name of present for specific services, which does no more than prove that your Petitioner had *merited* a present, for he never received any other than the sum of 500l. that was due to him for salary. The ambiguity of the second part, as it appeared to your Petitioner's attorneys, was merely as to the stability of the appointment, it being made provisional. Your Petitioner was to give no cause of dissatisfaction; but in case he did not, it was the *fixed intention* of the honourable Court of Directors to allow your Petitioner the same yearly consideration.

Your Petitioner continued to serve the honourable Company with the same unremitted attention as he had done before during all the season of the year 1779, and rendered them all the service that the situation is capable of, during that year; but has received no more for the same than 142l. 10s. being deficient of what was promised him a sum of 357l. 10s.

Your petitioner not having demerited, by any misconduct, a discontinuation of his salary, he has an undoubted claim upon the Honourable Court of Directors for so much as is deficient of the 500l. that was promised to be given him, and that was due to him for the service of the year 1779, but your Petitioner has a claim upon the equity of the honourable Court of Directors for a much larger sum for salary, if their promise of a handsome salary was to be fulfilled with a view to the expences he has incurred by the unavoidable obligations of his office; with a view to the degree of trouble and perplexity he sustained in forwarding of the honourable Company's servants; with a view to the time and attendance he was forced to give away from a business, that lost more by that sacrifice than all he has received for salary from the honourable Company. Your Petitioner, so far from having received any thing in a comparative view with his expences, his trouble and his services, is a loser by the effect of his attention to the honourable Company's affairs a sum of upwards of five thousand pounds.

Your Petitioner, in stating himself to be a loser by the effect of his employment, as agent to the honourable Company, has not comprised the further losses he sustained by his expulsion from Cairo. And he has avoided to attribute that act of the government of Egypt to any proceeding of the honourable Court of Directors, it being, in your Petitioner's mind, of a complexion too dark, too atrocious, to have been fostered by magistrates, acting by the rule and spirit of British laws, or by Englishmen, knowing and enjoying the blessings of liberty.

That the honourable Court of Directors may not, however, be ignorant of the sufferings their Petitioner sustained, while in the legal exercise of his privilege of trade in Grand Cairo, and attending his duty of agent to the honourable East India Company, he will endeavour concisely to

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bring

bring the principal facts before them, and to aid the matter of his petition, by a picture of his distress, that men, thinking as men, must commiserate and relieve.

Your Petitioner will first shew by what authority he undertook to settle in Egypt. His first title to the authority of the British laws is his right of freedom to the privileges of the Levant Company; and the privileges allowed by the Porte to every Member of the Levant Company are stated at large in the Articles of Capitulation, subsisting to this moment, between the British and Turkish empires. The 4th article says, "All English ships, great or small, may, at all times, come and enter into any port or harbour whatsoever of our dominions, and set out from thence when they please, without being delayed or hindered by any person whatsoever." And the 37th article says, "The English merchants, and all that come under the colours of England, may freely and safely traffick and trade in Aleppo, Cairo, Scio, Smyrna, and in all parts of our dominions, paying, according to ancient custom, 3 per cent. for all their merchandize, and no more."

It was in virtue of those powers that your Petitioner settled in Egypt, and he enjoyed the privileges therein stated, during the years 1775, 1776, 1777, 1778, and part of the year 1779, without a sign of hindrance or molestation. The Turkish government, as much as any government upon earth, have ever maintained inviolate, with regard to the British nation at least, the faith and honour of their capitulations: nor to this day would they have violated that particular grant regarding the right of trading to Egypt, without the advice and instigation of the British ambassador at the Porte, protesting and declaring, in order to enforce his scheme, that the persons concerned in that trade, were pirates and rebels to their Sovereign; and asserting this application was made in consequence of instructions from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the India Company.

In the course of April and May, 1779, four vessels arrived at Suez. Two of them were packets on the Honourable Company's service, and on board one of them was Lieutenant Scott, carrying dispatches with accounts of the capture of Pondicherry, and who brought letters from the Governor of Madras to your Petitioner, thanking him for the very essential part he had contributed, by his intelligence, to that important event, and telling him that he had made proper mention of it to the Honourable Company. Two of the vessels was loaded, and, as usual, the goods were landed under a written promise of protection from the Basha and Beys; but soon after they were landed, and, at a convenient time for the purpose, by surprise the ships at Suez were seized, and the captains and men confined and loaded with chains. The property was taken away, and your Petitioner and every Englishman in Egypt was arrested and threatened with perpetual slavery. For the government of Egypt, when they

they had accomplished this scene, produced to your Petitioner a command from the Porte, not only authorising but ordering them to pursue such conduct, and taking away all hopes of remission or mitigation of the sentence; for no man, at his peril, was to intercede for their deliverance.

Your Petitioner was furnished with a copy and translation of the command; and in one part of it, it says, "We ordered, consequently, that the English, thenceforward, should return no more to Suez, nor even approach to its coasts, having enjoined expressly that they should be made to return. We notified these our orders to the English ambassadour, residing at our Sublime Porte, and required him to transmit them to his court. The answers which he received, as well from his court as from the East India Company, contained severe prohibitions to any of their subjects to come to Suez after the end of 1778. This minister, in communicating these severe prohibitions to the Sublime Porte, did at the same time declare, by the mouth of his first interpreter, that, in case of contravention, the effects of those who should contravene might be seized; their vessels confiscated, the crews of the ships and the supercargoes imprisoned and condemned to perpetual slavery."

And in another part, to enforce the execution of the decree, appealing to the vengeance of Heaven, it says, "May God confound those in this world, and punish them in the next with an eternal punishment, who, constructing this evil to be a good, approve the coming of the Franks to Suez. Keep before your eyes the example of India. Consider the end of things, and suffer not this intercourse. Seek out those who secretly assist them, and punish them in such a manner as has no example, such as they deserve, you will not be permitted to alledge any pretence of justification. Imprison the captains of the Frank vessels, and above all, the English upon their coming to Suez; and seize their ships, for it is set forth in the memorial of the English ambassadour, in the answers from his court, and in the verbal information of his first interpreter, that they are pirates and rebels to their Sovereign. They are such to our Sublime Porte, and as such they merit imprisonment and the confiscation of their goods. You will give advice of your proceedings to the Sublime Porte, and we will decide without permitting any one to intercede for their deliverance."

Seized under the authority of such a command, what must have been the state of mind of your Petitioner and his companions? The protection of their country declared by their own ambassadour, at the instigation of the India Company, to have been forfeited, and themselves declared pirates and rebels to their Sovereign! Consigned over to the Turkish power by the man whose appointment it was to defend and protect all British subjects from any subjection to the Turkish laws! What must have been the situation of those who were implicated in this command? their persons imprisoned, and the fruits of the industry of the

former part of their lives confiscated, without a possibility of alledging that your Petitioner was in any degree to blame; or that he ever had any intimation from the Honourable Company that the intercourse was contrary to their wishes; or that any application had been made to the ambassador to suppress it, much less expecting it was to be stopped in a manner so contrary to all the rules of justice!

Such were your petitioner's sufferings, in consequence of a command that robbed him of an establishment, that no authority less than an act of the whole legislature of Great-Britain could warrant an English Ambassador forcibly to deprive him of. That entailed upon him the last of all misfortunes to an honest mind; that wrested from him the means of present subsistence; and which, at this moment, reduces him to be a Petitioner to your honourable Court for help, for justice.

In this stage of your Petitioner's case nothing more has been aimed at, than the drawing of a just comparative view of his ordinary annual services; the losses he has sustained by his attention to the duties of his office; and the sums that he has received in compensation of those losses and those services: and to submit to the honourable Court of Directors how inadequate every thing he has received is to the consideration of his disbursements; the pains and perplexities attending the duties of his office; the losses he has sustained by the violence of the Egyptian Government, and the consequent inability of providing for his support, from the hour of his expulsion, in the year 1779, unto this time, 1783. Your Petitioner has had no desire of influencing the justice of the honourable Court of Directors, by calling their attention to the effect of his vigilant and successful exertions in the course of the year 1778. Whatever may be their decision with respect to the matter of salary submitted to their consideration, he hopes that he has a claim upon their munificence, distinct from every other claim, for services that tended indispensibly in their consequences to gain them Pondicherry, and which eventually was the cause of their possessing what at this time is possessed by the honourable Company in India.

Such, in truth, was the importance of the conquest of Pondicherry to the honourable East India Company. That your Petitioner was the indispensable instrument of that event, is manifested by the honourable Company's records themselves. Not to exceed the bounds of a Petition, your Petitioner begs leave to add a printed copy of the success of the intelligence he sent to India in the year 1778, as an Appendix to this Petition, and in proof of these assertions.

In a national view your Petitioner's services extended farther. They enabled Government to recall the succours that were on the way for the protection of the honourable Company's possessions, and to appoint them

them to such service as tended to the preservation of our fleets and islands in the West Indies. They enabled the honourable Company, instead of wanting protection, to give three ships of the line to Government, and bounties to six thousand forces.

Your Petitioner would have been made a happy man with only a fortieth part of what was given away in consequence of the successes obtained by your Petitioner's zeal and activity, in forwarding early and essential intelligence to India at a very important crisis.

Your Petitioner, therefore, most humbly hopes, that, taking into consideration the inadequacy of the sums he has received to the merits of his ordinary annual services, and the situation of distress he is in from the loss of his establishment, consequent to his employment in the honourable Company's service, the honourable Court of Directors will afford him some immediate relief.

And that, in contemplation of the extraordinary services he has rendered to the honourable Company, by the effect of his zeal and attention to their interest in the course of the year 1778, and of the benefits derived to the honourable Company by so timely an exertion, they will think him worthy of their desired protection, and appoint him to some adequate employment in their service, which is your Petitioner's utmost ambition; and that they, in their wisdom and goodness, being pleased to grant, your Petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

GEORGE BALDWIN

No. 35, Essex-Street, Strand, April 23, 1783.

EX-

EXTRACTS from the Minutes of a General Court held April 7th, 1779, for the Purpose of conferring Rewards on such as by their Zeal and Activity had contributed principally to the great Successes recently obtained over the French in India. With Remarks thereon applying to the Share Mr. Baldwin at Cairo had in promoting those Successes.

At a GENERAL COURT, held on WEDNESDAY the 7th
of APRIL, 1779.

THE Chairman acquainting the Court in pursuance of their unanimous resolutions of the same date, is now appointed to take into consideration several motions then offered for making certain presents to the several Directors of this Company, by whom, and under whose authority, orders were given for attacking the French settlement of Pondicherry in the East Indies; and to the Governor of Madras, and Commander in Chief of the Company's Forces there, by whom the said orders were carried into execution; and to the Admiral of his Majesty's fleet assisting therein:

It was moved,

“ That the thanks of this Court be given to Sir George Wombwell, Baronet, Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, for his great attention to the welfare of this Company, in the early, spirited, and decisive orders which were sent to the several presidencies in India to commence hostilities against the French, which orders have been productive of the most beneficial consequences to the nation and the East India Company, by the reduction of Pondicherry. And this Company being further desirous of testifying their sense of such wise and
decisive

decisive orders, to request Sir George Wombwell, Baronet, Chairman of this Company, to accept a piece of plate, value five hundred pounds, as a memorial of their acknowledgment." And the same was agreed to unanimously.

Another motion was then made, and on the question thereon, it was resolved unanimously, "to request Sir William James, Baronet, Deputy Chairman, to accept of a piece of plate, value three hundred pounds."

Another motion was then made; and after the question being put, it was resolved unanimously, "to request William Devaynes, Esq. late Deputy Chairman of this Company, to accept of a piece of plate, value three hundred pounds."

Another motion was then made, and after a debate thereon, it was resolved unanimously, "that the thanks of this Court be given to Sir Thomas Rumbold, Baronet, President of the Council of Fort St. George, for the very important services he has rendered to the Nation and this Company, by the zeal and attention he has manifested in carrying the order of the Secret Committee, for commencing hostilities against the French, into immediate execution."

A Motion was then made, and unanimously resolved, "that the thanks of this Court be given to Sir Hector Monro, K. B. Major-General and Commander in Chief of the Company's forces on the coast of Coromandel, for the very important services he has rendered to this nation and to the East India Company, by the reduction of Pondicherry. And this Court, desirous further to testify their sense of General Monro's merit, do vote that a sword set with diamonds, value seven hundred and fifty pounds, be presented to him as a mark of their approbation of his conduct."

It was then moved, and on the question being put, resolved unanimously, "that the thanks of this Court be given to Sir Edward Vernon, Knight, and a sword, value seven hundred and fifty pounds, be presented to him as a mark of their approbation of his conduct."

A Motion being then made, and the question being put, it was resolved unanimously, "that the thanks of this Court be given to the Court of Directors for their zealous attention to the interests of this Company, in appointing Sir George Wombwell, Baronet, Chairman, Sir William James, Baronet, Deputy Chairman, and William Devaynes, Esq. late Deputy Chairman, to be a Secret Committee, with powers to give orders to the Presidencies in India on the commencement of hostilities with France; in consequence of which the orders for the reduction of Pondicherry arrived with the utmost expedition, and took the earliest effect, with the most desirable success, before any succours could arrive to the relief of the place."

EXTRACTS from Dispatches received from the different Presidencies in India, relative to the Arrival of the COMPANY'S Orders in India, and other Intelligence of the French War, by which their Operations were chiefly guided.

- 7th July, 1778. The Governor and Council of *Bengal* received a Letter from Mr. *Baldwin* at *Cairo*, with intelligence of the *French War*. Immediate measures taken in consequence for the security of the Company's Possessions. *Chandernagore* taken, &c.
- 20th Ditto. Further advices received from Mr. *Baldwin* on the same subject.
- 10th August. The Secret Committee's Orders of the 15th *April* were received.
- 25th June, 1778. The Governor and Council of *Fort St. George* received intelligence from Mr. *Baldwin* respecting the *French War*. Preparations immediately made for attacking *Pondicherry*.
- 22d July. The Secret Committee's Orders of the 15th *April* were received, at which time the greatest part of the Army destined for the Siege of *Pondicherry* had reached *Conjaveram* on their way thither.
- 13th March, 1779. The Select Committee at *Fort St. George*, in their Letter of this date, recommend Mr. *Baldwin* to the Court's favor, "for his giving them the earliest information of the public affairs in *Europe*."
- 12th June, 1778. Intelligence received by the Governor and Council of *Bombay* from Mr. *Baldwin* respecting the *French War*. A Vessel sent Express to *Madras* and *Bengal* with advice thereof.
- 16th July. Secret Committee's Orders of 15th *April* received. The above Extracts compared and considered.

Rewards and Honours have been conferred on the Members of the Secret Committee, for the early, spirited, and decisive Orders regarding the commencement of hostilities against the *French*; which Orders were productive of the most beneficial consequences to this Nation and the *East India Company*, by the reduction of *Pondicherry*.

Thanks were voted to the Court of Directors for appointing a Committee, and empowering it to give such orders for the commencement of hostilities, as by their timely arrival in *India* took the earliest effect, and were attended with the most desirable success, before any succours could arrive to frustrate the operations of the siege of *Pondicherry*.

And honours and rewards were conferred on the Governor and Commander in Chief, for the zeal and attention they manifested in carrying the orders of the Secret Committee into immediate execution.

All the advantages that were gained are pointedly attributed to the vigilance and determined spirit of the Secret Committee, in sending such speedy and decisive orders to *India* to commence hostilities against the *French*.

All the merit ascribed to the Officers in *India* is that of carrying those orders into immediate execution, before any succours could arrive to the relief of the place.

And the thanks that are voted to the Court of Directors are specifically for empowering a Committee to dispatch those orders, knowing that time is gained when business is conducted by a few; and every moment was precious, when the arrival of succours in the place must render every attempt against it useless and ineffectual.

It was argued, and agreed on all hands at this General Court, that so materially did the Successes we had obtained depend upon the early arrival of those Orders in *India*, that had they been retarded by longer deliberation a week, or by accident in their progress, the reduction of *Pondicherry* would have been utterly impracticable. Those therefore who had secured advantages so precariously depending, and of such importance to this Nation, by a timely exertion, are proper objects of attention and Reward.

Now the Question is, Whether or not the Orders that were sent are fairly entitled to all the merit that is attributed to them? We do not mean to subtract in the least from the merit of the Secret Committee, who in framing the Orders did all that their Situation would permit them to do. We mean to scrutinize the effect of the orders, and to ascribe the advantages that were gained where they are more properly due.

The orders were dated the 15th of April, 1778, and were given in charge to Capt. Matthews, recommended to Mr. Baldwin in his passage through Egypt.

Captain Matthews arrived in Cario on the 9th June, and was the next day furnished with camels and a guide to take him across the desert. He had scarcely begun his journey before a revolution happened in the Government, and was overtaken by many of the routed party, who so alarmed his Guide, as to cause them to leave him alone on the desert, exposed to
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perish

perish by heat, by famine, or by the hands of the robbers. Mr. Baldwin suspecting his situation, sent out people to his relief, who found him after three days, and brought him back to town. He then procured him fresh conveyance, and a strong escort, though in the midst of all the disorders of a disputed Government, and forwarded him safe to Suez.

He left Cairo on the 14th of June, later by two days than Mr. Baldwin's advices were received at Bombay, so that the intelligence of the war was in India, while the Company's orders were yet in Egypt, and in a very precarious situation as to their safety.

Captain Matthews arrived however safe at Fort St. George on the 22d of July. The Governor and Council of that settlement tell you, in their dispatches advising of their success, "That when they received the Company's orders, they had already assembled an army for the siege of Pondicherry, and the greatest part of that army had reached Conjeveram on its way thither. That the moment the Company's orders were received they began the attack, and that they were finally successful, &c. &c."

Now how came it that an army had been assembled, and marched almost under the walls of Pondicherry, before the Company's orders arrived? Why, they tell you, that on the 25th of June they had been apprized, by letters received from Mr. Baldwin of Cairo, of the state of affairs in Europe, so late as the 9th of April inclusive, containing a copy of the American treaty with France, and his Majesty's message to both Houses of Parliament upon that subject, besides the hostile detention of the British ships in the ports of France; the return of the different ambassadors to their respective homes; the sailing of the Toulon fleet, &c. &c. Which intelligence, authenticated so as to deserve the most implicit credit, had warranted their utmost exertions, and they were marching towards Pondicherry when the Company's orders attained them.

The orders were in time most assuredly to partake of the glory; but supposing they had found no army assembled, no previous notice arrived to prepare them for such an event, what would have been the consequence? Would it have been possible for the utmost of all human exertions to collect an army, and to provide it with every requisite for a siege, (all circumstances of situation, of season, of additional resistance from the enemy considered) as would have been in fact, or even deemed to be in time, to have made the attack with any probability of success? Would they not have required a single week to prepare? And with what success then, if a week's delay would have frustrated all their efforts? In fact, with the army they had, and all the advantages of a month's preparation, the place was carried with all imaginable difficulty. A week's longer resistance would have baffled all their hopes. What then was to be expected from an army not yet assembled, when the rains set in, having to encounter

an enemy reinforced with succours that appeared off the place within a week after its surrender? They would have attempted nothing! The opportunity would have been lost, and this nation involved in a series of calamities, that would have been attended with the loss of all our possessions in India, and perhaps of all the British colonies in the world.

Without Mr. Baldwin's previous information, therefore, the Company's orders (to which all the merit is ascribed) would have availed nothing.

What would have been the case, supposing the orders had never arrived, which, without Mr. Baldwin's peculiar attention, never could have arrived? What would the Government and Council of Fort St. George have done without the Company's orders?

See what the Governor General of Bengal and Council did without orders:—"On the 7th of July, 1778, a letter was received from Mr. Baldwin at Cairo, with intelligence of the French War. Immediate measures were taken in consequence for the security of the Company's possessions. Chandernagore was taken, and the French expelled from that country."

On the 10th of August the Secret Committee's orders of the 15th of April were received.

The Governor General and Council of Bengal therefore acted from the merits of Mr. Baldwin's information alone, without waiting for the Company's orders to commence hostilities. It was a case that spoke for itself: and would not the Governor and Council of Fort St. George have done the same? They had proceeded as far as circumstances and the utmost diligence could carry them. They suspended no operations for a moment to wait the Company's orders. The greatest part of the army was marched to Conjeveram, almost in sight of Pondicherry, when the orders arrived; and would they not have attacked the place without orders? Would they have sacrificed the opportunity of doing so much good, and averting so much impending harm, for the want of a formality? What was to deter them? the responsibility of the measure? They were gone too far to let the idea of responsibility alarm them: the necessity of acting was too clearly evinced to balance upon the question. They would have acted, and have made, as others did, the responsibility they embarked in their greatest merit. They went upon creditable grounds; they were possessed of unequivocal intelligence of the hostile proceedings of the French in Europe; they had the example, and it is presumed the advice, of the Government of Bengal to justify their acting: they had cut off all internal communication with the place; and were they to wait for orders, which a thousand accidents might have intercepted, to remove a scruple about the propriety of attacking, or to give them authority under such a circumstance to act? No, no: the consequences would.

would have been too fatal. No rhetorick could have averted the load of reproach that must unavoidably have been the lot of those, who by losing an opportunity of doing so much good, would have entailed on this country (it may be repeated) the loss of all the Company's possessions in India, and perhaps of all the British Colonies in the world.

In such an event therefore as the miscarriage of the Company's orders, the public would have been indebted singly to Mr. Baldwin for all the advantages resulted to this country from our successes in the East. And it is to Mr. Baldwin alone that the Secret Committee are indebted, that that event did not happen.

It would not have diminished in the least the merit of the Secret Committee, that their endeavours should have had no part in the successes: but Mr. Baldwin would have appeared in a more conspicuous light. His zeal in that case might have been noticed, and his claim to the public applause acknowledged and rewarded.

He now has no other share——

Than first conceiving and establishing the communication with India through Egypt, by means of which alone the orders could be so speedily conveyed.

Than rescuing the orders from the horrors of the desert, when abandoned and exposed to unavoidable loss.

Than forwarding them again with the utmost diligence to Suez, amidst the disorders of an insurrection in the city.

Than preparing the governments in India with such intelligence of the French war, as in Bengal were deemed sufficient to warrant hostilities, and as at Fort St. George enabled him to collect and assemble their army, time enough to render the Company's orders effectual.

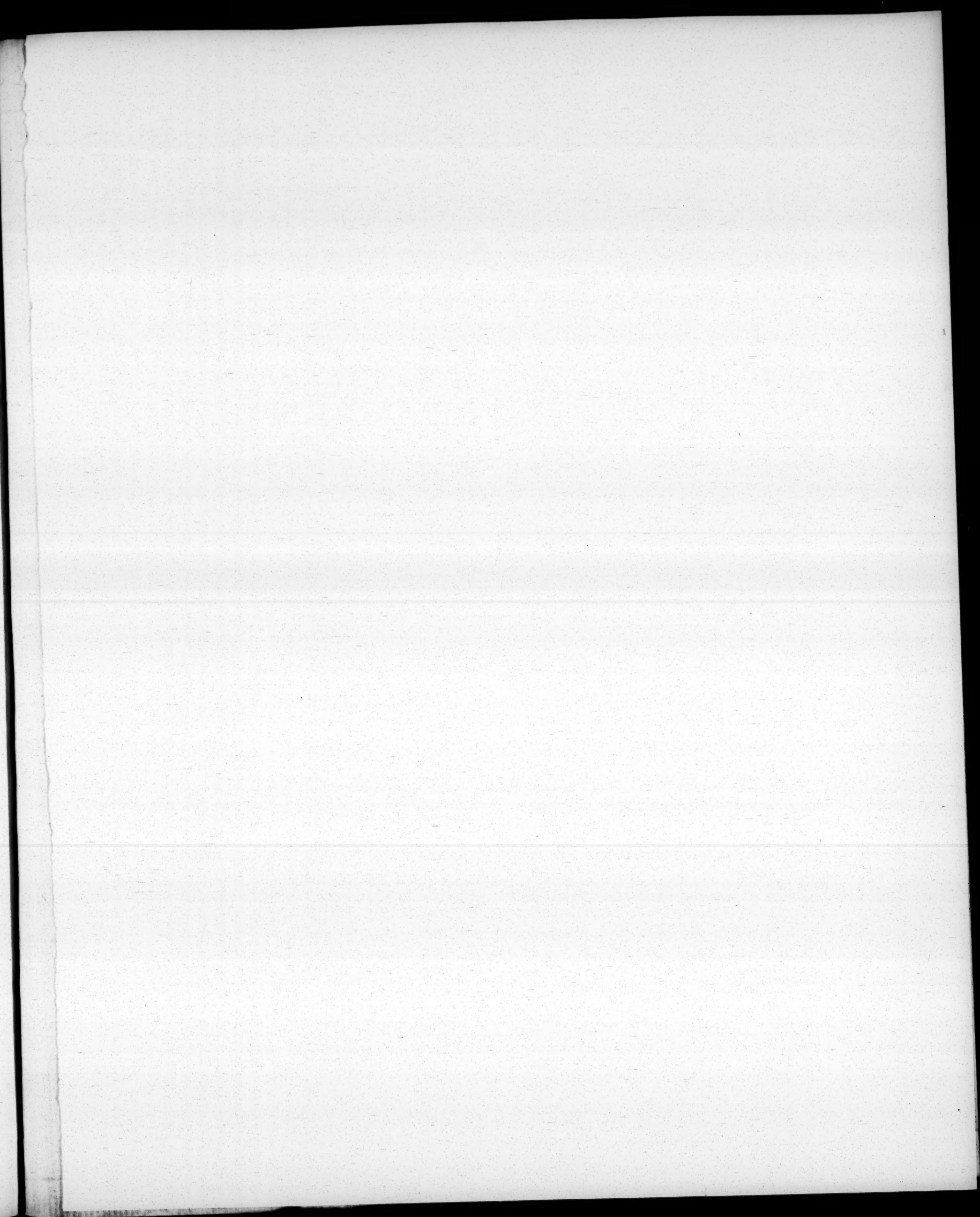
Such is Mr. Baldwin's merit, summed up in a few words,

That without his services, the Secret Committee's orders would have availed nothing.

That without the Company's orders, his services might have operated every thing that has been operated with them.

The Secret Committee has been rewarded liberally; and Mr. Baldwin has been plundered, and drove from his establishment at Cairo, by such acts of violence as would disgrace a Nero or a Caligula.

THE END.



ARMINIAN MAGAZINE.



Ridley sculp

Mr. James Rogers,

Aged 46

Preacher of the Gospel.